

South Dakota National Guard

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Employers receive unique look into Air Guard training

By Staff Sgt. Luke Olson
114th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. – The South Dakota Air National Guard's 114th Fighter Wing and South Dakota Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve invited about 20 employers and civic leaders on a "Boss Lift" air refueling mission that departed from Joe Foss Field, April 11.

The employers nominated by their Air Guard employees, boarded two KC-135 Stratotankers assigned to the 185th Air Refueling Wing, of Sioux City, Iowa, and witnessed three 114th F-16 Fighting Falcon jets conduct an air refueling training mission.

The ESGR Boss Lift program is intended to gain and maintain support from all public and private employers of Reserve component members by providing insight into their employee's military duty.

Each employer was invited to the boom operator's bay on the aircraft to observe the refueling action up close. The Boss Lift provides employers an opportunity to see first-hand what citizen-Airmen experience while away from work to attend military training or activated for a federal or state mission.

Col. Russ Walz, 114th commander, briefed the employers about the 114th and the South Dakota Air National Guard and spoke about a variety of topics to include: mission accomplishment, deployments, readiness, recent awards and economic impacts. Walz explained how the 114th provides coverage to protect the homeland 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and 365 days a year and expressed his thanks to the employers for their support of this mission.

Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, adjutant general for the SDNG, briefed the group about the history of the South Dakota National Guard and emphasized how much he values the employers' support of service members.

"We rely greatly on our traditional Guardsman and Reservists and without your support we wouldn't be able to do our jobs," said Reisch. "The role you play is certainly a direct role in the defense of this nation."

Almost half of the nation's military strength resides in the National Guard and Reserve making them an essential part of the military. The link between members of the National Guard and Reserve and their civilian employers led to the creation of ESGR.

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“A successful Boss Lift helps develop strong personal relationships between employers of Reserve component members and the Department of Defense,” said Jonathan Goehring, ESGR program support technician. “It provides employers and supervisors the opportunity to better understand what their employees do when they are away from their civilian occupation for military duty.”

The ESGR representatives also explained the mission of ESGR, which is to develop and promote employer support for Guard and Reserve service by advocating relevant initiatives, recognizing outstanding support, increasing awareness of applicable laws, and resolving conflict between employers and service members.

The employers concluded the day by signing the ESGR “Statement of Support,” which is the cornerstone of ESGR’s efforts to gain and maintain employer support and is intended to ‘open the door’ to develop employers as advocates for their employees participation in the National Guard and Reserve.

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High resolution photos are available at www.flickr.com/photos/southdakotationalguard



150411-Z-LQ671-089: Employers and business leaders from across South Dakota board a KC-135 Stratotanker refueler aircraft from the 185th Air Refueling Wing, Sioux City, Iowa, as they take part in a “Boss Lift” at Joe Foss Field in Sioux Falls, S.D., April 11, 2015. The South Dakota Air National Guard’s 114th Fighter Wing and South Dakota Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve hosted the Boss Lift to provide employers an opportunity to see first-hand what citizen-Airmen experience while away from work to attend military training or activated for a federal or state mission. (U.S. Air Force National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Luke Olson/Released)



150411-Z-LQ671-164: A 114th Fighter Wing F-16 Fighting Falcon rendezvoused with a KC-135R Stratotanker from the 185th Air Refueling Wing, Sioux City, Iowa, during an air refueling training mission that took off from Joe Foss Field, S.D., April 11, 2015. The 114th Fighter Wing and South Dakota Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve hosted a “Boss Lift” to provide employers an opportunity to see first-hand what citizen-Airmen experience while away from work to attend military training or activated for a federal or state mission. (U.S. Air Force National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Luke Olson/Released)



150411-Z-TF102-012: Employers and business leaders from across South Dakota pose for a group photo before boarding a KC-135 Stratotanker refueler aircraft from the 185th Air Refueling Wing, Sioux City, Iowa, as they take part in a “Boss Lift” at Joe Foss Field in Sioux Falls, S.D., April 11, 2015. The South Dakota Air National Guard’s 114th Fighter Wing and South Dakota Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) hosted the Boss Lift to provide employers an opportunity to see first-hand what citizen-Airmen experience while away from work to attend military training or activated for a federal or state mission. (U.S. Air Force National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Luke Olson/Released)

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